Historic, Archive Document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.

1.9
H755R

LIBRARY
RECEIVED
★ NOV 17 1930 ★
U. S. Department of Agriculture

HOUSEHOLD CALENDAR

A radio talk by Mrs. Rowena Schmidt Carpenter, Assistant to the Chief, Bureau of Home Economics, delivered through WRC and 38 other ~~radio stations~~ associated with the National Broadcasting Company, November 6, 1930.

How do you do, Homemakers!

Those of you who tune in regularly know about my plan for a series of special programs this month, featuring members of the White House Conference on Child Health and Protection. It was my hope to have Dr. Louise Stanley, Chief of the Bureau of Home Economics with me as the speaker today, because she has been closely associated with the work of this conference from its beginning, both as a member of President Hoover's planning committee, and as chairman of one of the working committees. But since Dr. Stanley could not come to the studio today, this is my opportunity to tell you some of the things that our committee on furnishing and equipping the home for children has said in our report to the White House Conference.

During the lifetime of the present generation homes have improved in furnishings and equipment so far as convenience, comfort, sanitation, and beauty or esthetic qualities go. But in too many homes we are still not considering the children, and especially not the younger children. We adults thoughtlessly put ourselves and our interests first. If we can afford beautiful furniture, rich floor coverings, and delicate china we are very likely to get those things, and then protect them from our children by a wall of don'ts and restrictions.

"Look, children, at the mud you have tracked over the rug. Why can't you remember to take off your galoshes on the porch or in the hall?" ---- And why, we might ask that disturbed mother, didn't you remember to equip a family wrap closet with a low shelf or rack for overshoes, and some low hooks for coats?

So it goes all over the house. We keep trying to make our children fit our furniture and equipment and home arrangements instead of providing a few things for their size and comfort. And then we wonder why the little tots never put their own things away, are often restlessly crawling over the best furniture, and frequently need scolding or punishment for one thing or another. We wonder perhaps because we are disturbed by things as they affect us, but we would do better to wonder because of the effect this totally adult environment is having on the child.

There are, of course, reasons why children's interest have been very largely squeezed out of the plan as we furnish our homes. Many of us in cities live in apartments or small houses, and there seems to be no space for children's furniture other than perhaps the necessary high chair and carriage. But more often the reason is that as parents, perhaps as new parents, we just fail to realize how important it is for the child to have not only a place that is his very own, but a few things to meet his needs in every part of the house. It

Over

seems that this lack of realization on the part of parents must be the principal reason, because often even in the home of space and plenty no provision is made for the child except in a special playroom where he spends only a part of his time.

Our committee report does not make a plea for an elaborate outlay of special furniture or a great variety of expensive toys. It points out the fact that what the child needs most can often be provided at very little expense and placed with ease in even the tiniest of homes. It is really just a matter of giving thought to the children in every part of the house from the front door to the back. For the youngest child, a low hook or two in the family closet, and in the living room a small chair and a few books or toys on the bottom book shelf.--Somewhere a special place to keep his clothes,-perhaps only the bottom drawer of his mother's dresser,-and a box or shelf for his toys and other possessions where they are in his easy reach. His own bed if possible, ideally in his separate bedroom, --- A towel rack and toothbrush hook low enough for the shortest member of the family to reach them, and a sturdy stool or set of movable steps in the bathroom for the toddler to stand on when learning to wash himself independently. It can be done, this matter of providing for the best interests of the child of each age all over the house, but sometimes it means a little sacrifice on the part of the adults. It may be necessary to give up for a time both the space and the money some extra piece of living room furniture would require, meanwhile putting that money into a playpen that occupies the extra space in the apartment living room. Not ideal perhaps, but if there is no other spot available or none so convenient for the mother to observe the baby at play while she works, then it is one of those desirable makeshifts in planning the furnishings of the home for family rather than for adult satisfaction.

Before I say goodbye, homemakers, let me remind you that next week another special speaker, Dr. Hildegarde Kneeland, will bring you something from the White House Conference on Child Health and Protection.